

**STAFF MEETING MINUTES  
LANCASTER COUNTY BOARD OF COMMISSIONERS  
COUNTY-CITY BUILDING  
ROOM 113  
THURSDAY, JUNE 15, 2000  
8:15 A.M.**

Commissioners Present: Kathy Campbell, Chair  
Larry Hudkins  
Linda Steinman  
Bernie Heier  
Bob Workman

Others Present: Kerry Eagan, Chief Administrative Officer  
Dave Kroeker, Budget & Fiscal Officer  
Dave Johnson, Deputy County Attorney  
Ann Taylor, County Clerk's Office

**AGENDA ITEM**

- 1 APPROVAL OF STAFF MEETING MINUTES OF THURSDAY, JUNE 8, 2000 AND AGENCY BUDGET HEARING MINUTES OF TUESDAY, MAY 30, 2000**

**MOTION:** Hudkins moved and Workman seconded approval of the Staff Meeting minutes of June 8, 2000 and the Agency Budget Hearing minutes of May 30, 2000. Hudkins, Workman, Steinman, Heier and Campbell voted aye. Motion carried.

- 2 ADDITIONS TO THE AGENDA**

A. Microcomputer Request C#2000-117 from County Administrative Services, \$1,695.87 from the Microcomputer Fund (Exhibit A)

**MOTION:** Heier moved and Hudkins seconded approval of the addition to the agenda. Heier, Hudkins, Steinman, Workman and Campbell voted aye. Motion carried.

### 3 BUDGET UPDATE - Dave Kroeker, Budget & Fiscal Officer

Dave Kroeker, Budget & Fiscal Officer, presented copies of a memorandum received from Gwen Thorpe, Deputy County Clerk, indicating that four responses had been received to the Request for Proposals (RFP) for a records management software application for the County Clerk's Office and that cost estimates range from \$43,200 to an amount in excess of \$200,000 (Exhibit B). The memo also stated that assistance is needed in evaluating that office's needs and the responses to the RFP, which will also have a budget impact. Kroeker said \$30,000 has been appropriated in this year's budget for the project. He recommended that that amount be absorbed back into the General Fund and that the project be funded through the Keno Fund instead.

The Board concurred with Kroeker's recommendation.

Kroeker distributed copies of a revised recommendation from Dennis Keefe, Public Defender, on the Nebraska Legal Services contract (Exhibit C). He noted that Keefe will continue to work with the judiciary on balancing assignment of counsel.

Kroeker reviewed *Community Mental Health Center, 2000/2001 Budget Adjustments* (Exhibit D). He reported that Denise Bulling, Special Grants Administrator, has indicated that it is her intent to leave her current position and exercise her retreat rights at the Community Mental Health Center (CMHC), although she will not be returning to the position she formally held at that facility.

Board consensus to schedule further discussion of the proposed budget adjustments and Bulling's employment with Dean Settle, Community Mental Health Center Director, on a Staff Meeting agenda.

Kroeker reviewed the following (Exhibit E):

- *Adjustments to Administrative Services Budget*
- *Relocation from Building Fund, Furniture Estimate*
- *Adjustments to Human Services Budget for Grants Manager*
- Projected rent for additional space on the first floor of the County-City Building

In response to a question from Campbell, Kroeker estimated the cost of adding three positions in the County Board of Commissioners Office (Deputy Chief Administrative Officer, Grants Manger and Clerk Typist III) at \$100,000.

The Board authorized Kroeker to include these expenses in the budget, but deferred final approval pending further review of the entire County budget.

**4 MEETING WITH UNIONS REGARDING HEALTH INSURANCE -**  
Georgia Glass, Personnel Director; John Cripe, Classification and Pay Manager; Bill Kostner, City Risk Manager; Diane Staab, Deputy County Attorney

Georgia Glass, Personnel Director, reported on a meeting that the Personnel Department and Gina Samland, Marsh, Inc., held with representatives of the bargaining units to discuss health insurance proposals received from United Healthcare of the Midlands and Mutual of Omaha (Exhibit F). She said the option of a combination Health Maintenance Organization (HMO) and Preferred Provider Option (PPO) health plan was well received, but noted there was concern regarding the increases in the prescription co-payment amounts.

Hudkins asked whether further negotiation with the insurance companies on the issue of prescription co-pay increases was possible.

Glass said she did not think so, as prescription costs are a driving force in increasing health insurance costs. It was noted that this amount is the standard for the industry.

Bill Kostner, City Risk Manager, said prescription co-pay costs for plans utilizing formulary lists are even higher. He added that the mail order prescriptions will still be available to employees.

In response to a question from Campbell, Glass said a core-buy-up option which would provide a lower monthly premium for a higher deductible amount was not discussed. She noted that Marsh Inc. had presented a variety of deductible options last year and they were not favorably received by the unions.

Kroeker asked why the City had opted for a Preferred Provider Option (PPO) plan.

Kostner said the City's claims experience was significantly better than that of the County's, which resulted in a better rate.

**5 LABOR NEGOTIATIONS - Georgia Glass, Personnel Director; John Cripe, Classification and Pay Manager; Diane Staab, Deputy County Attorney**

**MOTION:** Hudkins moved and Workman seconded to enter Executive Session at 9:23 a.m. for discussion of labor negotiations. Hudkins, Workman, Heier, Steinman and Campbell voted aye. Motion carried.

**MOTION:** Heier moved and Hudkins seconded to exit Executive Session at 10:04 a.m. Heier, Workman, Hudkins and Campbell voted aye. Steinman was absent from voting. Motion carried.

**6 TASK FORCE MEMBERS FOR PLANNING PROJECTS - Kathleen Sellman, Planning Director; Kent Morgan, Assistant Planning Director; Mike DeKalb, Planning Department**

Kathleen Sellman, Planning Director, said Mayor Wesely believes that the County should have greater representation on the Stevens Creek Basin Initiative Task Force and has indicated that he will make four of his appointments to the task force from a slate of names submitted by the County Board. The County Board will also make four appointments to the task force.

The Board reviewed a list of individuals that had indicated interest in serving on the committee and indicated that additional background information is needed.

Kent Morgan, Assistant Planning Director, agreed to provide available information to members of the City/Common at the June 16<sup>th</sup> meeting, at which time a deadline for appointments will be set.

The Board scheduled further discussion on the June 20<sup>th</sup> Staff Meeting agenda.

**7 INTERLOCAL AGREEMENT FOR THE HOMESTEAD TRAIL - Mike Brienzo, Planning Department; Terry Genrich, Parks & Recreation; Ross Greathouse, Great Plains Trail Network**

Mike Brienzo, Planning Department, presented a packet of materials detailing a proposal to designate 58 miles of abandoned Union Pacific Railroad line, extending one half mile south of Saltillo Road in Lancaster County to an area north of Marietta, Kansas, as the Homestead Trail (Exhibit G). He indicated the corridor on an aerial map and *Lancaster County's Land Use Plan* map, noting the following:

- City of Beatrice, Nebraska Trails Foundation and Lower Big Blue Natural Resources District (NRD) have filed for a Rails to Trails Conservancy which will keep the corridor intact for transportation purposes (180 waiting period initiated January 31, 2000)
- 771 acres are included in the corridor, 173 of which are in Lancaster County (26 of the acres located in Lancaster County are classified as reversionary)
- Corridor includes 28 bridges and 21 private crossings

Heier requested additional information on private crossing width.

Ross Greathouse, Great Plains Trail Network, said the NRD has not objected, to date, to changes to existing crossings or the establishment of any new crossings.

Heier and Hudkins indicated the need for written assurances.

Brienzo said Lancaster County has been asked to participate in a two phase interlocal agreement for development of the trail:

- Phase I - Determine public interest, identify funding sources, identify Phase II responsibilities and participate in preliminary planning, including a determination of the feasibility of acquiring the right-of-way
- Phase II - As yet to be determined

Dave Johnson, Deputy County Attorney, said he has reviewed the interlocal agreement and foresees no problem in committing to Phase I of the project.

Hudkins noted that the Gage County Board has rejected the proposal and asked whether the Lower Big Blue NRD would take up the area from Beatrice to Lancaster County.

Greathouse said the Lower Big Blue NRD has not voted on the proposal, to date. It was noted that there is also involvement from the Lower Platte South NRD and Nemaha NRD.

Heier asked whether there are plans to acquire additional property along the corridor.

Brienzo said no, but the group sponsoring the Homestead National Monument would like to establish a connection to that area which is located approximately four miles from the corridor.

Hudkins asked how Lancaster County would benefit from participation.

Brienzo said the proposal fits with the Wilderness Park Subarea Study recommendation to construct a trail along Salt Creek to the Roca area.

Greathouse noted that the value of the right-of-way can be used as match for federal funding.

Board consensus to review the materials and schedule additional discussion on a future Staff Meeting agenda.

**8 COMMUNITY PROSECUTION GRANT APPLICATION - Gary Lacey, County Attorney; Becky Hackbart and Paul Ladehoff, Lincoln Lancaster Mediation Center**

Gary Lacey, County Attorney, reviewed a proposal to submit an application for an eighteen month Bureau of Justice Assistance Enhancement Grant to enhance strategies for community justice, specifically in the area of juvenile crime (Exhibit H). He said the Lincoln Lancaster Mediation Center will administer the grant through a contract with the County Attorney's office and will coordinate the project.

Becky Hackbart, Lincoln Lancaster Mediation Center, explained that the grant will provide funds for her agency to expand the Victim/Offender Mediation Program to include victims of youth that are not part of the Diversion Program and youth that do not qualify for, or opt not to participate, in that program. She said the Mediation Center will be working closely with the County Attorney's office and the Screener in this endeavor.

Paul Ladehoff, Lincoln Lancaster Mediation Center, briefly explained the prevention component of the grant. He said the Medication Center will work with existing youth-serving organizations in the community to offer skill building exercises, conflict resolution and communication skills education for at-risk youth. It will also provide intervention options for families of at-risk youth and create prevention strategies that complement other program areas.

Heier asked how many families would actually be served by the grant.

Ladehoff estimated 25-50 per program, noting multiple programs will take place at the same time.

Eagan remarked that this proposal has strong ties to the Families First & Foremost (F<sup>3</sup>) Grant Program.

**MOTION:** Hudkins moved and Workman seconded to authorize Kerry Eagan, Chief Administrative Officer; Gary Lacey, County Attorney; and the Lincoln Lancaster Mediation Center to work out the details of submission of the grant application. Hudkins, Workman, Steinman, Heier and Campbell voted aye. Motion carried.

**9 PENDING LITIGATION** - Diane Staab, Deputy County Attorney; Larry Van Hunnik, Lancaster Manor Administrator

**MOTION:** Heier moved and Steinman seconded to enter Executive Session at 10:55 a.m. for discussion of pending litigation. Heier, Steinman, Workman, Hudkins and Campbell voted aye. Motion carried.

**MOTION:** Hudkins moved and Workman seconded to exit Executive Session at 11:01 a.m. Hudkins, Steinman, Workman, Heier and Campbell voted aye. Motion carried.

**10 CONSENT ITEMS**

- A. Vacation Request from Larry Van Hunnik, Lancaster Manor Administrator, for June 19, July 3 and July 14, 2000
- B. Microcomputer Request from County Clerk, \$1,270 from the County Clerk's Budget for Compaq Pentium III
- C. Microcomputer Request C#2000-117 from County Administrative Services, \$1,695.87 from the Microcomputer Fund

**MOTION:** Hudkins moved and Steinman seconded approval of the Consent Items. Hudkins, Workman, Heier, Steinman and Campbell voted aye. Motion carried.

## 11 ADMINISTRATIVE OFFICER REPORT

### A. LB 1085 Consolidation Report

Peter Katt, attorney, appeared regarding the recommendation from the Lancaster County Consolidation Committee to merge the offices of the County Assessor and Register of Deeds . He presented copies of a letter expressing the title insurance industry's position on the issue (Exhibit I).

Campbell said the Board had reviewed all four of the committee's recommendations with the leadership of that committee, as well as the officeholders. She said a public hearing would need to be held prior to placing the consolidation issue on the ballot, although additional information is needed on that process.

Katt said the *Final Report and Recommendations of the Lancaster County Consolidation Committee*, issued in 1998, does not define the objectives of such a merger, explain how the merger will work or provide a definitive plan for transition. He said the Register of Deeds office is essential to the functions of the title insurance industry and downtime is a major concern.

Hudkins asked whether the industry would be better served by consolidation of the two offices.

Katt said the industry believes that the Register of Deeds office is efficient and well run. He suggested that if the County Board wishes to pursue governmental efficiencies and consolidation issues, that a model to accomplish that be established with involvement from entities impacted by those offices, such as occurred when the Register of Deeds moved to the mainframe.

Heier asked whether Katt was appearing as a concerned citizen or was representing one of the parties in the matter.

Katt said he was representing Dan Nolte, Register of Deeds.

Heier asked who was paying Katt for this representation.

Katt said he could not divulge that information, but indicated that he has not been retained by the County.

Dan Nolte, Register of Deeds, said he is personally responsible for payment of Katt's fees.

In response to a question from Steinman, Katt said it is unclear whether the objective of the merger is cost savings or efficiencies.

Hudkins said he is also concerned with the impetus behind the merger proposal.

Eagan reviewed Nebraska Revised Statute §22-416 which outlines the procedure for placement of the consolidation issue on the ballot (Exhibit J).

Katt said placement of the issue on the ballot implies that it is advantageous to consolidate the offices. He suggested that further study of the issue is needed.

Steinman said a public hearing will provide an opportunity to bring additional information forward.

Hudkins indicated that he supports having a users committee evaluate and make recommendation on consolidation.

Campbell said that was the purpose of the Lancaster County Consolidation Committee. She said that group brought forth recommendations that the County Board has an obligation to look at.

Hudkins said the committee was broad based in nature and did not fully explore pertinent issues.

Eagan said while input from the industry is invaluable, it is unfair to allow one segment of the community to "drive the bus".

Steinman suggested having staff look at the cost savings issues.

Campbell said cost savings should not be the only driving factor for merger. She said it may be advantageous to have consolidated leadership when planning for technological advances and coordinating land use issues in the future. Campbell said she does not oppose having a committee bring forth additional information, but believes that the issue needs to proceed to public hearing.

Hudkins suggested exploring whether the consolidated position could be appointed, rather than elected.

**MOTION:** Steinman moved and Heier seconded to direct Dave Kroeker, Budget & Fiscal Officer; Dale Gruntorad, Chair of the Lancaster County Consolidation Committee; and Dick Johnson, retired member of the title insurance industry, to prepare information regarding cost savings to be realized from consolidation of the offices of the County Assessor and Register of Deeds and whether operational efficiencies will be gained from such a merger, with a report back to the Board by July 13, 2000.

The Board requested information from the Election Commissioner and the County Attorney on the timing sequence for placement of the issue on the ballot.

**ON CALL:** Steinman, Heier, Hudkins, Workman and Campbell voted aye. Motion carried.

#### B. Roadkill Bids

Eagan reported that Industrial Services was the only bidder for the contract.

Workman said it was his understanding that another party had bid the contract.

The Board asked Eagan to contact the Purchasing Department and verify the number of bids, prior to Board action at the Tuesday, June 20<sup>th</sup> County Board of Commissioners meeting.

#### C. Private Maintenance of Auto Diagnostic Equipment

Board consensus to refer the results of a survey of private maintenance shops on diagnostic equipment maintenance agreements to the County Engineering Department for review and recommendation.

#### D. Fireworks & Dry Conditions

Campbell and Hudkins reported that they had been contacted by a constituent who had suggested that the County Board prohibit fireworks in the County in dry conditions, although he allowed that it may be too late to do so this year.

The Board requested that the County Attorney's Office review the ability of the Board to prohibit fireworks in the County.

Hudkins will notify the constituent that the issue is being researched.

#### E. Joint Meeting with the City Council and Lincoln Public Schools Board on Monday, September 18, 2000 at 7:30 a.m.

Campbell reported on an invitation from the Lincoln Public Schools Board to meet with that body and the City Council on September 18<sup>th</sup> to discuss land use planning issues. She noted that quarterly meetings had been suggested.

Hudkins suggested that the representatives of the rural schools districts be invited to a future meeting.

**MOTION:** Hudkins moved and Heier seconded to accept the invitation from the Lincoln Public Schools Board and suggest inclusion of discussion of the new Lancaster County Juvenile Detention Center on the agenda . Heier, Hudkins, Workman and Campbell voted aye. Steinman was absent from voting. Motion carried.

#### F. Great Plains Resource Conservation & Development Program (RC&D) Correspondence

**MOTION:** Steinman moved and Hudkins seconded to place consideration of a resolution supporting the Great Plains Resources Conservation and Development and appointment of a Lancaster County representative on the June 20<sup>th</sup> County Board of Commissioners Meeting agenda. Steinman, Hudkins, Workman, Heier and Campbell voted aye. Motion carried.

G. Report on Families First & Foremost (F<sup>3</sup>) Grant Conference

Eagan reported on his recent attendance at a Families First & Foremost (F<sup>3</sup>) Grant Conference that was held in New Orleans, Louisiana. He stressed the need for the County Board to be kept apprised on grant activity and how the grant is being administered.

Board consensus to schedule a briefing by Sheryl Schrepf, Families First & Foremost (F<sup>3</sup>) Grant Director, on the June 29<sup>th</sup> Staff Meeting agenda.

**LABOR NEGOTIATIONS** - Georgia Glass, Personnel Director; John Cripe, Classification and Pay Manager; Diane Staab, Deputy County Attorney

**MOTION:** Workman moved and Hudkins seconded to enter Executive Session at 11:54 a.m. for discussion of labor negotiations. Workman, Heier, Hudkins, Steinman and Campbell voted aye. Motion carried.

**MOTION:** Heier moved and Steinman seconded to exit Executive Session at 12:07 p.m. Heier, Steinman, Hudkins, Workman and Campbell voted aye. Motion carried.

**12 DISCUSSION OF BOARD MEMBER MEETINGS**

A. Information Services Policy Committee - Steinman, Workman

Steinman said the City Finance Department has agreed to let the County and Information Services use their procurement card for Internet purchases.

Steinman also reported that there will be an amendment to the email policy to prohibit employees from accessing personal email accounts.

B. Parks & Recreation Advisory Committee - Workman

No report was given.

## C. Public Building Commission - Campbell, Hudkins

Hudkins reported that discussion focused on:

- Software security system
- Problems with law enforcement's proximity readers
- Replacement of the Prisoners of War (POW) flag in front of the Justice and Law Enforcement Center
- Parking issues

### **13 EMERGENCY ITEMS AND OTHER BUSINESS**

Campbell reported that Lynn Johnson has been appointed the new Parks & Recreation Director.

Hudkins reported that Scott Sidwell has been appointed the new Nebraska Association of County Officials (NACO) Executive Director.

### **14 ADJOURNMENT**

By direction of the Chair, the meeting was adjourned.

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Bruce Medcalf  
Lancaster County Clerk